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JUGOSLAV ASPIRATIONS

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Scarcely one outside Germany and Austria-Hungary knew before the war who the Yugoslavs were, where they live, and what were their struggles and aspirations. For the cabinets of Europe they were somewhere in the East, a troublesome, semi-barbaric race, disturbing Turkey and Austria-Hungary in their blessed work of "civilization," and complicating even more the Balkan tangle, so ingeniously inaugurated at the Congress of Berlin. The Yugoslav question was simply not existing, and that which the Yugoslavs themselves outlined as their problem, was left entirely to be settled by Berlin, Vienna and Budapest. The iron heel which is now oppressing almost the whole world, and against which the whole world rose in arms, was considered good enough and well deserved when it was applied only to the Yugoslavs. It is not exaggerated to say, that before the war the Yugoslavs had no friends in Europe, that every door on which they knocked remained shut for them, and that the voice of the few advocates they had in foreign countries remained a voice in the desert. Partitioned as they were, and subject to three rulers, they were considered only troublesome, but never dangerous for the intentions of either group of European powers, which based their policy on deceiving catch-words like that of "balance of power" and "peaceful penetration." And whereas the Teutonic powers very cleverly exploited all the advantages of a situation created by the blindness of their sentimental adversaries, the Entente powers not for a moment conceived that the Near-Eastern problem includes in itself all the threads of the Far-Eastern and Western problems. Things were left to go as they went, or far more as they were directed by Germany and Austria-Hungary, the only two

powers which never ceased to pursue their Eastern policy with the utmost rationality, energy and directness. Knowing only too well that war-preparedness is the strongest basis for the attainment of imperialistic aims, they prepared feverishly, without making a secret of it, inviting even the remainder of sleepy Europe to be onlooker of their rising military growth. The biggest lie in history, that German and Austrian armaments have the innocent intention to be the strongest guardian of peace, was accepted by European diplomacy as ready money, and except France, there was no European power which conceived, that if peace is to be guarded with armaments, German and Austrian armaments ought to be counterbalanced by equal armaments. German propaganda, one of the most wonderful organizations in the world, and being an integral part of the preparedness policy, succeeded marvelously in deceiving Europe even on this point, and whenever a suspicion rose or a protest made itself just a little more credible, the peace assurances were doubled, and Europe was assured that Germany must be strong for her mission as the world's saviour against the Pan-Slav monster. It did not matter that at the same time the Pan-Slav monster was cajoled and invited to join Germany and Austria-Hungary against the other powers. European diplomacy cared little to penetrate into the real and true facts, it sufficed to have whatever excuse to muddle away, whatever straw to catch at, and Germany was never too tired to spread all over the world whole trusses of straw for the convenient use of European diplomacy. And so those whose duty it was to hear everything, and to see everything, preferred to remain deaf and blind, and passive in face of all the events. But events have their own logic, which no diplomatic tricks can turn aside from its straight-on way, and this logic is proceeding mercilessly towards its goal. The moment was to come, when the logic of events in the Balkans and the logic of events in the remainder of Europe has to come to a tremendous clash at whatever cost on either side. Europe, that Europe which pretends to be democratic, human and civilized, but which not only allowed, but protected Turkish and

Austro-Hungarian oppression in the Balkans and in Yugoslav lands in Austria-Hungary, was by the logic of events destined to awake to a rude reality. It was destined to pay for its sleepiness and passivity with millions of lives and with a misery unsurpassed in history. And it was at last destined to side with those whose oppression it tolerated, and whose warnings it despised. And the logic of events, victorious like every truth, forced upon Europe, and consequently upon the whole world, the great and far-reaching importance of the Yugoslav problem.

The annexation of Bosnia-Hercegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908 was the first big event resulting from the policy of preparedness, and the first step in the realization of the Austro-German programme of Mitteleurope. It was accomplished boldly and with the Entente as an angry but powerless onlooker. The result was that Entente diplomacy opened one eye, only to faster shut the other one. The bite in the sour apple of Austro-German success was sweetened by the avoidance of world conflagration. The due logic of events was surely acknowledged, but the fact was again overlooked that events do not stop, that the first act of the Balkan drama must necessarily be followed by the second, third and so on, until the very ripe problem is either way settled. The second act was the Balkan war with its epochal internal and external results. Undertaken in defiance of the European concert it pronounced the determined judgment of the Balkan peoples that they have decided to settle their question among themselves, without outside interference. It was a hard blow to European diplomacy, but at the same time it was the first strong emphasising of the principle of self-determination. Diplomacy of course once more attempted to upset such an unheard of insolence, and the conference of London was designated to spoil the over-weeningness of the Balkan peoples. But it was doomed to failure, and the continuation of the war, and subsequently the peace of Bucharest sealed the fact, that peoples, even if small and weak, break with the foul tradition of being led and commanded by the big and strong ones. Germany and Austria-Hungary, who already during

the war succeeded to persuade Bulgaria to become a shameless traitor on the common cause, accepted the treaty of Bucharest with furious rage, whereas the Entente diplomacy preferred to show an artificial indifference. This indifference was so great that it failed even to note the Austro-German preparations for the tremendous third act.

The successes of the Balkan wars, especially the glorious resurrection of Serbia, were a deadly thorn in Austro-German eyes. There was not the least doubt that the strengthening of Serbia will provoke the utmost opposition of Austria-Hungary who suddenly saw all her Balkan plans endangered, and that nothing will be left unturned to bring about such a conflict, or such a pretended conflict, which will enable her to attack Serbia, before this country has recovered from the military exhaustion of the Balkan war, and before Russia and the Entente powers are adequately prepared to defend her. But besides endangering the Austro-German "Drang nach Osten," the resurrection of Serbia multiplied the long existing menace for Austria-Hungary, arising from the strong movement of her Yugoslav subjects towards liberty and unification with the victorious brothers across the Danube and Drina. This movement, suppressed with all the means, legal and illegal, by the governments of Vienna and Budapest, developed after the Balkan wars with such rapidity and force, that the foundations of the Hapsburg Empire, fraudulently cemented together, began seriously to totter. This was one means more to hasten preparations for the ruin of Serbia, and over her ruins the way to German world domination. Had European diplomacy at that time rightly understood the tremendous significance of the Balkan situation with all its hangings-on, and had it taken the only steps dictated by the situation, instead of again muddling away, the allies would have met the onslaught of the Central Powers better prepared, not only military, but politically which would have been of immense value in dealing with the mailed and oiled host of the Kaiser. But the logic of events was again overlooked, and the logic of events brought about the greatest and bloodiest war in history.

The outbreak of the war opened at last the eyes of the whole world, including the European diplomacy, and the grand conception of Berlin and Vienna became at last vivid to everybody. The innocent German lamb and the double-headed Austrian rooster, pained in fear of the Pan-Slav bear, were "forced" to draw the sword for their "protection," and to protect themselves by slaughtering millions and destroying the noblest values of humanity. The mighty fan of their aims and ambitions, which was so long clasped together, opened, and the stupefied world learned for the first time clearly the judgment the Kaiser pronounced over it. The unanimous reaction which followed, and which should have been less bloody if set at work long ago, pronounced its counter-judgment culminating in the proclamation of the principle of democracy and national self-determination. With that the whole immense reservoir of national problems all over the world, was at once opened. Subjugated nations and oppressed peoples got for the first time an acknowledged right, not only to raise their voice, but to be heard. There is no wonder if they availed themselves of this right with all the means of disposal. Subjugation and oppression are terrible whoever imposes them, but if the oppressors are Germans and Magyars, the oppressed are surely the most unfortunate beings on earth.

The Yugoslavs are one of the nations which through centuries had to suffer bitterly under Austro-Magyar domination, and which through centuries in vain tried to attain its liberty, independence and unity. In vain and in spite of the fact that to every student of national and political conditions in southeastern Europe the Yugoslav problem must present itself as one on which the whole structure of a peaceful Europe must be based. But the Yugoslav problem has attracted little consideration in the past, as far as the allies are concerned, and its significance has only begun to penetrate into the mind of the "few responsible" since the war has brought in an imperative form the Yugoslav problem on the order of the day. At present the truth cannot be any more concealed, that the Yugoslav question is one

of the most important, perhaps even the foremost question of the present war. It includes in itself not only a Yugoslav, but also an imminent European and world problem. It is the flesh and the bone of the whole Eastern Question. If all the problems of the war are settled, excluding only the Yugoslav problem, there is no doubt that the future peace will be a very strong Austro-German peace. It would mean to lay new, and even firmer foundations for the next terrible catastrophe of mankind. It would mean a full victory for the Kaiser and for the truly grand, and truly dangerous idea of Mittel-Europe. A right and just solution of the Yugoslav problem is equal to a right and just solution of the problem of German world domination, for by protecting the one and destroying the other, the basis can be established for a lasting peace. It must never be forgotten that German world domination can be attained only on an open road to Constantinople and the Persian Gulf, and conclusively to Egypt and India. On this road the Yugoslavs—if independent and united—can, will and must be the only barrier. If this barrier is made strong and firm, there is no power which will break through.

Since the Yugoslav problem made itself familiar with public opinion in Europe and America, there ensued much talk about the proper solution of it. But among many excellent ideas which less or more hit the mark, there were only too many aiming at a partial solution, very often in the interest of Austria-Hungary, or at least with the intention to satisfy both, Austria-Hungary and the Yugoslavs. Such ideas and proposals betray the highest grade of political dilettantism. If the Yugoslavs consented to have a partial solution of their question, they could have it at once, and the whole Yugoslav propaganda would be superfluous. Austria-Hungary would be only too glad to settle the whole question in a partial sense, and recent events in the dual monarchy fully confirm this fact. Therefore it cannot be strongly enough emphasized that a partial solution of the Yugoslav problem is no solution at all, and that no one of the 13,000,000 Yugoslavs will ever declare himself contented or will accept a partial solution. The Yugoslav problem is

thoroughly ripe, and must be solved in its entirety. It is the *sine qua non* of the future peace. And it must not be forgotten, that as determined as the Yugoslavs were in their struggle for deliverance, freedom and unity, as determined they will be in defending their standpoint, not only in their own interest, but also in the interest of democracy, humanity, and a better and juster Europe. In opening before the world all the aspects and prospects of their problem, they do not beg for alms, nor do they expect to gain anything from a charitable disposition of this or that statesman. With the utmost resolution they demand justice, nothing but justice. They are no beggars but a proud, capable nation, whose aspirations are indisputably just, and indisputably clean. There are only two aims by putting forward the Yugoslav question. First, to enlighten real democracies all over the world on the true facts and on the righteousness of Yugoslav aspirations, and second to destroy the misunderstandings and misrepresentations which were accumulated by Austro-German propaganda before the war, and which still are spread by Austro-German agents and pacifists of different patterns throughout the allied countries. In treating it this way the Yugoslav problem cannot fail to engage the genuine sympathy and the support of everyone to whom the principle of democracy and national self-determination is no mere phrase.

As already mentioned, the Yugoslav question went before the war almost unnoticed in Western Europe and in America. Only the Teutonic powers have realized its full importance and have treated it accordingly, of course from their own point of view. For Western Europe the complex of the Balkan question never included that part of the Yugoslav lands which was under Austro-Hungarian domination, although it was an indivisible and integral part of it. The average public, not excluded some "far-sighted" diplomats, got used to regard the Balkan question more from the point of back-stair stories, imagining the Balkan peoples as good minded ruffians, playing with sword and fire among themselves, but not endangering the lazy indifference of Europe. Only very few recognized that the Balkans were

not a stage, but a real weather-corner, where Germany and Austria-Hungary have stored an immense quantity of diplomatical, political and economic explosives, with the purpose of setting at a moment's notice the whole world in flames. From the Berlin Congress onward Austria-Hungary and Germany were supplied with a "laissez passé" in the Balkans, and it was their supreme task to divide the Balkan peoples and to make each of them a powerless tool in their hands. Turkey and Bulgaria readily consented, and even Rumania was for a considerable time an Austro-German vassal. With the acquirement of Turkish and Bulgarian support, easily fomented owing to Turkish impotence and Bulgarian greed, Germany and Austria-Hungary got almost free hands in political and economic matters in the Balkans, the more as they were, although unwillingly, supported by Rumania also. It must be owned that Turkey and Bulgaria were of immense value to the Teutonic powers, not only in peace time, but even more in siding with them in the present war. Turkey's and Bulgaria's capacity to subjugate themselves under the Teutonic will, and their exceptional position as proteges of certain European states was fully exploited by Germany. It is still inexplicable how could Turkey and Bulgaria, who were the arch-intriguers of the Balkans, ever gain all the sympathies of Europe whereas at the same time those, who sincerely and faithfully guarded the interests of humanity and civilization at the doors of the East, remained misunderstood and even despised. Much was of course done by Turkish and Bulgarian propaganda, the later prominent by its shamelessness and hypocrisy, but there are ample proofs that it ought in first line to be attributed to the very able machinations of Germany and Austria-Hungary, who know how to impose upon the world their own opinions, and how to mislead everybody concerning their designs.

But there was in the Balkans one state which never consented to be lead by Germany, and which equally refused to be honored with the "mighty" protection of the Apostolic Hapsburgs. A state which desperately struggled to make the world believe that the Austro-German "Drang nach

Osten" means its destruction and a tremendous menace for the whole world. That state was Serbia. Small and weak in comparison with its hereditary foes, but determined and strong in its will of self-preservation and its defence of Europe and humanity, she remained in all her struggles and sufferings faithful to right and democracy. Unfortunately only very few were there to appreciate it. Europe, and even America saw Serbia only in those colours with which she was painted by Austria-Hungary. No one was interested in the fact that Serbia represents a modern, truly democratic state, with a constitution equalled only in the United States, that her political, cultural and economic institutions can stand comparison with any of those in Western Europe, and that her art and literature deserve to be appreciated by all cultured nations. But she was throughout her national and cultural development the victim of perfidious Austro-German intrigues which paralysed all her progress. Not before Serbia's valiant stand in the Balkan wars has European opinion changed. And even then it was more the admiration for a nation of brave soldiers and gallant fighters than the right appreciation of her value as a member of the European communion. The fact was easily overlooked, that Serbia is called upon to play a tremendously important part in the development of world's affairs, and she was only too often left to fight alone her own and other's battles. Having Austria-Hungary continuously pressing her down like a nightmare, Serbia was unable to resist successfully, and she would have perished forever if Germany and Austria-Hungary had not prematurely disclosed their devilish plans for the destruction of the world. The greatest crime in history was necessary to convince Europe how right Serbia was in continuously warning the world of the Teuto-Magyar danger, and how more right in struggling mercilessly against subjugation under Austro-Magyar domination.

But the barring of the Eastern road was not the only reason for the destruction of Serbia as planned by the Teutonic powers. She was guilty of another crime, in that she tried and worked for the dismemberment and the parti-

tion of the dual monarchy. Yes, for that she worked, as far as her kinsmen in Austria-Hungary were concerned. But she did it in full agreement with the 9,000,000 of those enslaved kinsmen, who had and have the only and sole desire, the only and sole aim and longing, to be freed from Austro-Magyar yoke, and to be united with Serbia and Montenegro in one free and independent state. In this work Serbia acquitted herself only of her sacred duty as the only independent Yugoslav state. In her struggle against Teuto-Magyar penetration she was morally supported by all the Yugoslavs, who never ceased to gravitate towards Serbia as their liberator, and being chosen as the Yugoslav Piedmont, she naturally became the centre and the axle of the Yugoslav movement.

Now, who are the Yugoslavs, what are their aspirations, and what does their movement represent?

In the Serbo-Croat language Jug means South, and therefore Yugoslavs means Southern¹ Slavs, viz.: geographically the southern branch of the great Slav family. Historically the Yugoslavs bear three different names: Croats, Serbs and Slovenes. But ethnographically they are one and the same nation. They originate from the same stock, speak the same language, inhabit a continuous territory, their customs are identical, and from time immemorial their national aspirations aimed at restless unity. During the time between the fifth and seventh century the Yugoslavs migrated from the Trans-Carpathian regions into their present home, and in spite of living in different groups they never ceased to consider themselves one and the same nation.

At present the Yugoslavs number about 13,000,000. Five million live in Serbia and Montenegro, 7,500,000 in Austria-Hungary, and about half a million are living in America and the British colonies and dominions. Others are scattered in Northern Albania, in Greece and in Bulgaria. About 40,000 Yugoslavs dwell in the Kingdom of Italy. The western part of the Yugoslav territory in Austria-Hungary is occupied by the Slovenes, the centre by the Croats, the eastern part by the Serbs. But this is taken only in a general sense. As a matter of fact the Croat and Slovene elements

on the one hand, and the Serb and Croat on the other, are intermingled in the various countries.

The Slovenes were the first who succeeded in founding an independent state. The ninth century saw the birth of a Croatian and a Serbian state. The Slovenes were the first to lose their independence to Charlemagne, in 778. The Croats elected the King of Hungary to be their king after the extinction of their native dynasty in 1102. Serbia which reached its zenith under Tsar Dušan, was definitely conquered by the Turks in 1459. The Kingdom of Bosnia lost its independence to Turkey four years later. The Slovenes and Croats fell finally under the Austrian domination, the Serbs under the Turkish. The whole of Yugoslav history is full of struggles against Germans, Magyars, Turks and Venetians. These perpetual conflicts with their invaders and oppressors, have prevented the Yugoslavs from achieving their unification.

The French revolution at last awakened their national consciousness. It gave the impulse to the insurrection under Karagjorgje in 1804, and to the resurrection of Serbia. It inspired Napoleon with the idea of realising the partial unification of the Yugoslavs by uniting Dalmatia, Istria with Trieste, Carinthia, Carniola, Gorica-Gradiška and part of Croatia into an administrative unit under the name of Illyrian Provinces, a name derived from the ancient inhabitants of the Balkans, who were erroneously looked upon as the ancestors of the Yugoslavs. This unification, although temporary (1807–1815), represents one of the most precious pages in modern Yugoslav history. After centuries of oppression, the French introduced the native tongue in the schools and public life of the country. The Napoleonic experiment was followed in the thirties of the last century by another movement for Yugoslav unification, known as the Illyrian movement. It was in the end suppressed by the Austrian government, and Ljudevit Gaj, its originator, cast in prison.

The nearer we come to our own day, the stronger grows the national spirit, and the more ardent the desire for union. Already in 1869 the Croatian Parliament unanimously pro-

claimed the political identity and equality of the Serbs and Croats, and even passed a resolution whereby the Serbo-Croat language was in future to be officially styled the Yugoslav language. That same year a congress of the most notable Croatian, Serbian and Slovene patriots proclaimed in Ljubljana, the capital of the Slovene lands, with boundless enthusiasm the unity of all the Yugoslavs. Since then the whole national life of the Yugoslavs has been impregnated with the Yugoslav idea. But the more that idea progressed, the more it excited the persecuting fury of the Germans and Magyars, who—with right—looked upon it as highly dangerous for their hegemony. The last forty years of Yugoslav history are nothing but a fierce and unrelenting fight on the part of the Austro-Hungarian authorities against the irresistible Yugoslav movement. But the idea of national and political unity was eternal in the soul of the Yugoslav nation. It was in the mind of the great rulers of their national empires before the Turkish invasion, it was the ideal of all the martyrs of their race during the Ottoman oppression, it inspired their national poetry and the works of the great thinkers and poets of Dubrovnik, it gave strength to the heroic resistance of the Montenegrins, and to the rising under Karagjorgje which gave birth to modern Serbia. It directed every action of the great Njegoš, inspired the policy of Prince Michael, and has been the goal of all the house of Karagjorgjevic. It accomplished the renaissance of the Croats and Slovenes, which bore such heroic fruit in the struggles of 1848, and irradiates the life-work of the great Bishop Strossmayer. It was the primary cause of the long struggles of the Croats for their independence and unity, and of all the national struggles in Dalmatia, Istria, Rijeka (Fiume), and South Hungary, in the Slovene lands and in Bosnia-Hercegovina. Political deliverance, the integrity of national territory, and the foundation of a united State has been the final aim of all Pan-Croat and Pan-Serbian aspirations, of every constitutional struggle and of every riot and insurrection throughout Yugoslav lands, whether in Austria-Hungary or in the Balkans.

To resist effectively the tendency towards unification, displayed by their Yugoslav subjects, the Hapsburgs have pursued a diabolical policy, based first upon the principle of "divide et impera," and then upon a ruthless and tyrannical persecution.

A mere glance at a map shows that the Yugoslav lands under the rule of the Hapsburgs, form one continuous, unbroken territorial block. But instead of representing one homogenous province, it is shared between the two halves of the monarchy, and incidentally sub-divided under eleven administrations and fourteen legislations. The eleven separate administrations are: Croatia-Slavonia, Rijeka (Fiume), Dalmatia, Istria, the city and district of Trieste, Gorica-Gradiška, Carniola, Carinthia, Styria, the Yugoslav districts of Hungary proper, and Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Every one of these provinces (except Fiume and the Yugoslav districts of Hungary proper) has its mock-diet for those matters which are autonomous. Fiume has but a municipal council and the Yugoslav districts in Hungary, being under direct Hungarian rule, share the legislation of the Budapest Parliament. All provinces belonging to Austria, must besides send deputies to the Vienna Reichstag, while Croatia-Slavonia has for her common affairs with Hungary a common legislative in the Parliament of Budapest. There are also the Austrian and Magyar delegations for the common of the whole monarchy. The Diet of Bosnia-Hercegovina has no legislative powers and was created only as a mockery with the intention to deceive Europe. The autocratic administration of these provinces is shared between the Germans and Magyars of the monarchy.

The educational, judicial and ecclesiastical partition, the maritime service, and the railway and tariff policy are even more complicated than the territorial and administrative division. There the muddle is such that any student of Austro-Hungarian affairs would be stupefied and at pains to which quality to attribute it, to ingenuous perfidy or to utter stupidity.

Now, the object of this parcelling out was to divide the Yugoslavs by a series of watertight compartments, so as

to estrange each from the other, and to prevent their unification.

It would lead too far to record all the examples of Austro-Hungarian misrule in Yugoslav lands. They are so many that the space of an article does not suffice to record even the principal ones. Volumes have been written on this misrule. World known authors as H. W. Stead, R. W. Seton-Watson, Sir Arthur Evans, A. H. E. Taylor, Ernest Denis, Cheradame and others, have amply illustrated this misrule and that nonsense of a Hapsburg dominion which has the insolence to call itself a state. Leading statesmen of all the allied nations have openly denounced Austro-Hungarian misrule, and Lloyd-George was more than right when calling the dual monarchy a ramshackle empire. It is ramshackle to the core, it is perverse, unjust, cruel and vulgar, and among its Slav subjects it is boundlessly hated and despised. Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians and Jugoslavs are unanimous in their hatred, for each of these nations has abundantly experienced Austrian perfidy and Magyar brutality. And each of these nations demands its liberation from Austro-Hungarian rule, and each will consider the day of redemption as the greatest and happiest event in its history. Could anyone imagine that such a fervent desire to get rid of Austro-Hungarian rule can possibly originate in all these peoples and nations being malcontent elements, unable to accommodate themselves in an orderly state? Or that all the root of it rests with that Pan-Slavism, which Germany and Austria-Hungary have served to the world as an evil spectre? The Austrian premier, Dr. Seydler, in answering to the Entente, concerning the liberation of small nations, especially of those of Austria-Hungary, declared in the Austrian parliament, that no one of the Austro-Hungarian nations or nationalities wants to be "liberated" or torn away from the monarchy, because all are contented with, and happy under the present rule. This content and this happiness deserve to be nailed down. Without entering into things which happened in other Slav provinces in Austria-Hungary before and during the war, and which were just as monstrous as those that happened in

Jugoslav lands, and without enlarging upon reflections, a few statistics will suffice to give a vivid illustration of the content and the happiness of the Yugoslavs.

The pre-war persecutions and the reign of terror in Yugoslav lands, marked by an almost continuous suspension of the Constitution, by continuous dissolutions of the Croatian parliament and the provincial diets, by the brutal reign of the Magyar satraps Khuen-Hedervary, Baron Rauch and von Cuvaj in Croatia, by so many insurrections in Croatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Dalmatia, and crowned by numerous trials for high treason, of which the Zagreb trial in 1908 and 1909, founded on documents which were forged in the Austro-Hungarian legation in Belgrade, was a European scandal, were only preludes for all that terrible ravaging which took place since the war began. With the mere advent of war, the "happy and contented" Yugoslavs had to give proof that they do not want to be liberated. All the prominent national leaders were at once cast in prison, many of them notwithstanding the fact that they were members of the parliament, and protected by their parliamentary immunity. The property of all suspected persons was by mere administrative order confiscated for the benefit of the state and sold at auction, mostly to German and Magyar Jews. During the war these confiscations have overreached the number of 100,000. In Srijem, the richest agricultural district in Yugoslav lands, more than a thousand peasant families were evicted and deprived of their property, because they were pro-Serbian. Immediately afterwards the evacuated parts, mostly model farms, were colonized with Magyar peasants, the object being twofold: to prevent the property being ever returned to the rightful owners, and to Magyarise a purely Yugoslav district. More than 200,000 persons whose sentiments for Yugoslav freedom and unity were known to the authorities, were interned in penal camps, and it was openly stated in the Austrian parliament, that more than half of them have died as a result of the terrible sufferings imposed upon them. Monster trials for high treason were held everywhere, and death sentences poured down on the un-

fortunate victims like rain. Although all the sentences were not made public, from those which were published, it can be seen, that in Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and in the Slovene lands, not less than 35,000 people were executed for high treason and for crimes against the military power of the state. At one single trial, in Banjaluka, in 1915, sixteen people, belonging to the best classes of society, were sentenced to death on the gallows, and eighty-two to penal servitude amounting altogether to 858 years.

To proceed with similar statistics would mean never to end. There is a continuous chain, black and bloody, showing to the utmost extent the "happiness" of the Jugoslavs and their "disgust" to be liberated from the "blessed and fatherly" rule of the Hapsburgs.

It is true, there were in the past periods when the Jugoslavs tried to come to terms with their oppressors and to induce them to establish such conditions as would give to the Jugoslavs the possibility for a free political, cultural and economic development. But all and everything was in vain. The two dominant races, the Germans and the Magyars, although a minority in the Monarchy, never consented to sacrifice even a bit of their hegemony in the interest of democratic principles or the rebuilding of the state in a better and truer sense. It is therefore only natural that the principle of liberation and unity became a national dogma for all the Jugoslavs wherever they live.

The prospect of settling the Yugoslav question within Austria-Hungary has become utterly impossible, and there remains only one possibility to settle it, viz.: the liberation of the Jugoslavs, and their unification with Serbia and Montenegro in one single, free and independent state. This of course means the partition, and with the settlement of the Czech and Polish questions, the destruction of Austria-Hungary. But Austria-Hungary must be destroyed, because her destruction is a European and a world interest. To leave Austria-Hungary strong and in her present structure, means to leave the arch-enemy of humanity free to display all his evil abilities against democracy and civilization,

and simply to invite him to be yet more the limitless ally and supporter of German militarism and German devilish designs in the East.

Having in short lines exposed the birth and the development of the Yugoslav movement for unity and independence, with all the accompanying circumstances which have strengthened its determination, it is necessary to give some details and some explanation of the Yugoslav programme as regards liberation and the future Yugoslav state. The Yugoslav programme was not drawn up by a couple of politicians or learned men. Every single member of the Yugoslav nation, the nation as a whole, with all its longings and sufferings, the spirit which animated the public and private life of the Yugoslavs, which inspired their poets, artists and soldiers, all and everything which is theirs, collaborated to build up a national gospel on which Yugoslav future may be based. Therefore it can safely be said that the Yugoslav programme expresses and represents the true and genuine will of the entire Yugoslav nation. Framed in words, the Yugoslav programme finds its best expression in the momentous Declaration of Corfu, dated July 20, 1917, and signed by the prime minister of Serbia, M. Nikola Pašić, representing the government and the people of Serbia, and by Dr. Ante Trumbić, president of the Yugoslav Committee, representing all the unredeemed Yugoslavs of Austria-Hungary.

The declaration in ascertaining first, that the Yugoslav nation is absolutely unanimous in its will to be liberated and united, and declaring "anew and most categorically that our people constitutes but one nation, and that it is one in blood, one by the spoken and written language, by the continuity and unity of the territory in which it lives, and finally in virtue of the common and vital interests of its national existence and the general development of its moral and material life," proceeds to give a concise synopsis of Yugoslav struggles for independence in the past, which were unsuccessful as the Yugoslavs were numerically inferior to their enemies in the East and West, and it was impossible for them to safeguard their unity as a nation and a

state and their liberty and independence against the brutal maxim "might goes before right," militating against it both, East and West. But the moment has come, says the declaration, when the Yugoslav people is no more isolated. The war imposed by German militarism upon Russia, France, and England (and in the last instance upon America), for the defence of their honor as well as for the liberty and independence of small nations, has developed into a struggle for the Liberty of the World and the Triumph of Right over Might. All nations which love liberty and independence have allied themselves for their common defence, to save civilization and liberty at the cost of every sacrifice, to establish a new international order based upon justice and upon the right of every nation to dispose of itself and so organize its independent life, and finally to establish a durable peace, consecrated to the progress and development of humanity, securing the world against a catastrophe similar to that which the conquering lust of German Imperialism has provoked.

As to the future Yugoslav state which has to be established after this war, the declaration of Corfu gives the following main principles:

1. The state of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who are also known by the name of Southern Slavs or Yugoslavs, will be a free and independent kingdom, with an indivisible territory and unity of power. This state will be a constitutional, democratic, and Parliamentary monarchy, with the Karageorgević-dynasty, which has always shared the ideals and feelings of the nation in placing above everything else the national liberty and will at its head.
2. The name of this state will be the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and the title of the sovereign will be King of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.
3. This state will only have one coat of arms, one flag, and one crown.
4. The four different flags of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will have equal rights, and may be hoisted freely on all occasions. The same will obtain for the four different coats of arms.
5. The three national denominations, the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, are equal before the law in all the territory of the kingdom, and each may freely use it on all occasions in public life and before all authorities.

6. The two Cyrillic and Latin alphabets also have the same rights and every one may freely use them in all the territory of the kingdom. The royal and local self-governing authorities have the right and ought to employ the two alphabets according to the desire of the citizens.

7. All religions are recognized, and may be free and publicly practiced. The Orthodox Roman Catholic and Mussulman religions, which are most professed in our country, will be equal, and will enjoy the same rights in relation to the state. In view of these principles the legislature will be careful to preserve the religious peace in conformity with the spirit and tradition of our entire nation.

8. The Gregorian calendar will be adopted as soon as possible.

9. The territory of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes will comprise all the territory where our nation lives in compact masses and without discontinuity, and where it could not be mutilated without injuring the vital interests of the community. Our nation does not ask for anything which belongs to others, and only claims that which belongs to it. It desires to free itself and establish its unity. That is why it conscientiously and firmly rejects every partial solution of the problem of its freedom from the Austro-Hungarian domination.

10. The Adriatic Sea, in the interests of liberty and equal rights of all nations, is to be free and open to all and each.

11. All citizens throughout the territory of the kingdom are equal and enjoy the same rights in regard to the state and the law.

12. The election of deputies to the national representation will take place under universal suffrage, which is to be equal, direct, and secret. The same will apply to the elections in the communes and other administrative institutions. A vote will be taken in each commune.

13. The constitution to be established after the conclusion of peace by the Constituent Assembly elected by universal, direct, and secret suffrage will serve as a basis for the life of the state. It will be the origin and ultimate end of all the powers and all rights by which the whole national life will be regulated. The constitution will give the people the opportunity of exercising its particular energies in local autonomies, regulated by natural, social, and economic conditions. The constitution must be adopted in its entirety by a numerical majority of the Constituent Assembly, and all other laws passed by the Constituent Assembly will not come into force until they have been sanctioned by the king.

Thus the united nation of Serbs, Croatians, and Slovenes will form a state of twelve million inhabitants. This state will be a guarantee of their national independence and of their general national progress and civilization, and a powerful rampart against the pressure of the Germans, and an inseparable ally of all civilized peoples and states. Having proclaimed the principle of right and liberty and of international justice, it will form a worthy part of the new society of nations.

The declaration of Corfu has been hailed with enthusiasm throughout Yugoslavdom, but nowhere more than in those Yugoslav lands which are under Austro-Hungarian domination. Following the so called May-declaration by the Yugoslav deputies in the Austrian Parliament, in which they declared that the minimum of Yugoslav demands consists in the "unification of all the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes in a state organism, independent and democratic, and free of any foreign domination," the various Yugoslav deputies emphasized in their speeches in Parliament and out of it, that the nation never shall renounce its rights and aims, and whatever may come, the Yugoslavs demand to be heard and to be given the right of self-determination. Austrian and Hungarian statesmen energetically repudiated these Yugoslav "insolences," calling them traitorous, and Count Czernin declared that the self-determination, which he and his German colleagues so promptly asked for Ukraine, Finland, Lithuania and other parts of Russia, cannot be applicated to Austro-Hungarian nations and nationalities. But the Yugoslavs over there were grim and determined, and went their way forward. Today they openly proclaim the adherence to the declaration of Corfu. The results are grave disorders and collisions between police, army and civilians, and a rising revolutionary ferment throughout Yugoslav lands. In close collaboration with the Czechs who also demand their independent state, the Yugoslavs have brought the government to naught, and if the Allies could properly grasp the situation and exploit it in a right way, there would be instantly an open revolution in Austria-Hungary. The tempest is near, very near. There are too many signs for it. Continuous news arrives which indicates that great events are in store. The dissolution of the Austrian parliament is one sign, the conference between the Kaiser and the Austrian emperor the other. The further cementing of the alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary means a further extent of Prussian domination in the dual monarchy, and at the same time a further and more vigorous persecution of the non-German and non-Magyar nationalities. But whatever persecutions, what-

ever reign of terror, the oppressed nations stand prepared and ready for the last trial from which they hope to emerge as free peoples, strong enough to direct their own destinies.

As regards the territorial complex of Yugoslav aspiration there is little to explain. The declaration of Corfu points out that the territory of the new state has to include all the territory inhabited compactly and in territorial continuity by the Yugoslav nation. Geographically this includes the following provinces: (a) Serbia and Montenegro; (b) Bosnia-Hercegovina; (3) Dalmatia and the Dalmatian archipelago; (d) Croatia-Slavonia with Rijeka (Fiume), and the Megjmurje; (e) The country of the Drava in South Hungary, and the former Serbian Vojvodina, (Bačka and Banat); (f) Istria, the Istrian islands and Trieste; (g) Carniola and Gorica-Gradiška; (h) Southern Carinthia, Southern Styria, and the adjoining territory in South-Eastern Hungary.

In all these territories the Yugoslavs constitute a compact population of exceedingly pure race. The mixed population on the borders is due partly to natural contact with neighbouring races, and partly the artificial result of hostile policy, and cannot seriously affect the national character of the country.

All these lands form an ethnical unit, they are geographically contiguous, and economically interdependent.

Serbia and Montenegro with Bosnia and Hercegovina cannot attain their normal development without the possession of Dalmatia. Detached from its hinterland the Dalmatian coast would be valueless for commerce and navigation, and the safety of Dalmatia would be permanently jeopardized, were she deprived of her archipelago. One reason why Austria-Hungary occupied and annexed Bosnia-Hercegovina was, that she already possessed Dalmatia. Dalmatia and the Dalmatian archipelago must properly belong to the owner of Bosnia-Hercegovina. Moreover, in the Middle Ages Dalmatia formed an integrant part of the Yugoslav states—whether Serbian or Croatian—which arose during the course of history, and when she was incorporated with Austria, Dalmatia herself evinced the tendency towards

union with other Yugoslav countries. As the utmost that could at that time be aspired to, she asked to be united with Croatia-Slavonia, and the Diet of Zadar (Zara), and the Croatian Parliament in Zagreb never ceased to demand such a union.

For centuries Croatia-Slavonia sturdily defended her autonomy against Germanism and Austrian centralisation, no less than against magyarisation. In a union of all Yugoslav countries Croatia would at once take her proper place, first of all for ethnical reasons, secondly, because her national and political renaissance was accomplished under the banner of a great Yugoslav movement, and because the Croatian Parliament always demanded Yugoslav unity, territorial integrity and political independence. And finally because her three great waterways, the Save, the Drava and the Danube, as well as the railway that traverses the country and connects Belgrade with Rijeka, render Croatia the natural intermediate link between eastern and western Jugoslavia.

Rijeka is the only natural and practicable seaport for Croatia, and at present also for Serbia. The right of Croatia to Rijeka (Fiume) as an incontestable part of her territory was never called into question before the falsification of paragraph 66 of the Croato-Hungarian agreement of 1868. As a result of this crime Hungary deprived Croatia of the administration of the town and seaport of Rijeka, just as she had in 1861 deprived her of the administration of the Megjmurje, a purely Croatian district between the Drava and the Mur. As a port Rijeka is valueless without its hinterland, and this again cannot thrive without its natural seaport. A Yugoslav Rijeka is of vital necessity to Croatia-Slavonia, Serbia, and a large part of Istria and Carniola.

The possession of the Quarnero Islands and of Eastern Istria is inseparably bound up with Rijeka, just as Western Istria is bound with Trieste, the only seaport of the Slovene hinterland.

In the hands of the Yugoslavs, Trieste would prove, economically speaking, an important stronghold against Ger-

man economic pressure. If the Yugoslavs were deprived of Trieste and their communication with the sea, they would no longer be sufficiently strong to resist German southward pressure, which is continually encroaching on the Slovene territory in Carinthia and Styria. Only the possession of Trieste, Carinthia and Southern Styria can enable the Slovenes to block the advance of Germanism towards the Mediterranean, and so accomplish their mission as the Alpine Guard of the Adriatic and Yugoslavdom. In this capacity they would serve the interests of all the opponents of Pan-Germanism, and ensure the security of the allied powers as well, as the national existence of all the Yugoslav countries.

There are in Hungary 102,000 Slovenes, living between the Mur and the Raab, and 800,000 Serbo-Coats north of the Drava and the Danube. This entire population, which consists largely of wealthy landholders, can only be saved from forcible Magyarisation by union with the brothers of their race. If they are permitted to remain Yugoslavs, the fertile plains of the Bačka and Banat will be preserved to the nation and furnish the other Yugoslav countries with the granary they require.

Any partition of the national territory, and above all the cession of any part whatsoever to a foreign power, would not only seriously impede the development of Yugoslav unity and violate the principle of nationality, but would prove a mere repetition of the Austrian system, and a fresh source of endless conflicts and collisions.

When America decided to enter the war on the side of the Allies, the Yugoslavs at once felt that they won their greatest and mightiest supporter. Although little acquainted with the Yugoslav problem America's entry could not fail to include in its war aims the liberation of the Yugoslavs. President Wilson's momentous declaration concerning the self-determination of nations and peoples proved it. And today America is called upon, more than anyone else, to settle accounts with the Teuto-Magyar powers. This settlement cannot repeat past blunders, neither can it approve diplomatic tricks, intended to create a gloved barrier

around the European cancer, leaving the pestilential hearth untouched and breeding new catastrophes for mankind. America stands for right and democracy, and right and democracy must be the flag of the future peace. Germany and Austria-Hungary stand for autocracy and for oppression, and if they get a single button-hole through which to escape, they will remain a menace for peace and humanity. America's duty is to prevent this and to impose upon the world such a peace which will fully satisfy all those who have their life long fought and struggled for those principles which would make the world a decent place to live in. America's mighty will and her tremendous moral powers can achieve it.

The only thing the Jugoslavs ask, is justice. If justice conquers all the dark powers which have so long oppressed the world, then the Jugoslavs will at last get their own home in which they can devote all their abilities for the benefit of civilization and humanity. Their liberation and unification, so fervently desired by them, will be also a gain for the allied nations, respective for the world's democracy. With this war the Jugoslavs have entered the universal history, their problem being at last recognized as an integral link in the chain which extends from Hamburg to the Gulf of Persia. The Jugoslavs are one, and it can safely be said, the most important means to break this chain. Therefore democracy—true democracy—wherever it breathes, ought to help the Jugoslavs, to support their cause, and with that support to ennoble its own cause for which so much precious blood has been shed.